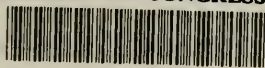


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ADDRESS

DELIVERED BY

DR. JOSHUA A. JONES

PRESIDENT OF WILBERFORCE UNIVERSITY
WILBERFORCE, OHIO

ON THE OCCASION OF THE ANNIVERSITY CELEBRATION
OF THE FIFTEENTH AMENDMENT TO
THE CONSTITUTION OF THE
UNITED STATES

AT METROPOLITAN A. M. E. CHURCH
WASHINGTON, D. C.

Tuesday Evening, March 31, 1908

MARY B. CURTIS
SHORTHAND REPORTER
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ADDRESS

BY DR. JOSHUA A. JONES

Mr. Chairman, Ladies and Gentlemen:

"I thank you very much for the splendid audience which you have furnished me to-night. I thank you for the opportunity to appear in the city of Washington after a sojourn from this city of more than twenty years. I was a student at one time in my history at Howard University. It was while I was at that university that I imbibed from great men such as Dr. Patten and others, many of the inspirations that went with me through the more than twenty years of my meanderings and hard labors, and I come back to-night with precious memories of those great men to greet not only this audience, but, on to-morrow, to go back to that sacred spot.

"It is true that I have not visited Washington very much, not because Washington was a place to me of no interest, but because my life has been so exceedingly busy and I have been so greatly taxed with the burdens that fell upon my shoulders that I could do nothing more than learn of you and read of you. So while I have not personally mingled with you in physical person, spiritually and intellectually, I have been with you. I have been with Howard University in all of her struggles, and I hope to God the time will never come that Howard University will change her history or ideals, but stand for the great things that she has always stood. (Great applause.)

"I am glad to meet the boys of Howard, for I am one myself. I want to say also that I wish to apologize for my speech to-night with which I shall afflict you, and I want to say to you that my only reason for wandering in this great place and in this city of learning and culture for the purpose of making a speech is that I am one of the Negro race in this country who shared with you the benefits of this immortal amendment to the Constitution. I come not because of my learning and ability to make a speech; I have come of a patriotic response to the call of my people. Some two weeks ago I received a letter from my good friend, Mr. J. W. Cromwell, stating that I had been selected for the purpose of speaking on this occasion and that he wanted me to speak on the subject of 'Higher Education for the Negro.'

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"I did not see the relationship between the anniversary of the fifteenth amendment to the Constitution and the subject of 'Higher Education,' but when I reflected upon the unity of knowledge and reflected also that those immortal amendments were intended to give to the Negro political and physical freedom and the freedom which education should bring to the intellect, I concluded to accept the task.

"I want to say also that it would seem at first that the subject of education had been expounded by its exponents to the American people so many times, and especially in this great center, that by this time the subject has grown old and non-interesting, but that is not true. The last word upon the theme of education has not yet been spoken, nor will the theme have grown old with the progressive. So long as the people are interested in education, the theme 'Education' will be new and young and fresh in their minds, and the last word, I repeat, will not have been spoken, nor can this great theme grow old. It is so impressive and so inclusive, and so great and comprehensive of the affairs of the state that education must ever be a large subject; hence I do not apologize for speaking to you to-night upon this subject on this all important occasion. I wish I were able to do as becomes this great occasion.

"Education in general, when spoken of, or in general terms, has such a unique idea that opinions concerning it are equally as unique; there is a unanimity of belief.

"Education for the Negro in particular is one that involves many opinions. I come to you to-night with some pronounced opinions. We speak of Negro education. Perhaps I may differ from a great many Negro educators and a great many white friends of the Negro. Nevertheless, I have reason for the faith that is in me. You must convince me, at least, before I change my mind. I say that there are a variety of opinions upon the great theme of 'Education,' and these opinions are not only varied, they are fast growing into great systems.

"Two instances will bring to our minds forcibly what I mean. I was at the quarter centennial anniversary of Tuskegee Institution. I sat in that vast audience for days and hours. At last there came a man I wanted to hear. It was the superintendent of education for the State of Alabama. When that gentleman came to the platform to speak, he said, 'I am interested in the cause of education. I believe in education, but,' says he, 'I do not believe that the same kind of education provided for and given to white people of this Republic should be given to the black man. I believe there ought to be a difference in the education provided for these two peoples. The white man ought to be better educated; higher, broader and deeper educated than the Negro; that the Negroes ought to be trained. Their education ought to consist in the matter of training for the vital pursuits of the communities in which they live.'

"That man, in my judgment, voiced the sentiments of a great many in this country who have backslidden from the advanced ground they took in the early days of our emancipation. (Great applause.)

"In the early part of the now passing academic years, the Southern Education Association, embracing all of the white teachers below Mason and Dixon's line, met in Kentucky for the purpose of discussing the great subject of 'Education' in its various phases. They discussed it beautifully, too. I was interested in the Associated Press reports concerning that meeting.

"Referring to visit at the quarter centennial anniversary of Tuskegee, finally the president of that great institution came forward with a splendid address. I was charmed by his utterances. Never a man spake more to my condition than he. As he passed down the line discussing the great theme of 'Education' he showed himself a perfect master of the great theme and that great department of our national activities. He showed himself to be master of the best that was written by Socrates, by Plato, by Aristotle, by Pestalozzi, by Herbert, by Spencer, and a host of modern educators. I applauded him at almost every paragraph. When he got to the middle of his address, he said, 'I pause, particularly to get your attention. I wish to speak now of "Negro Education."' That is a subject that has been greatly neglected by us in this country, and I believe that the time has come that we ought to insist upon this more than we have in all the past. I could wish that the States below Mason and Dixon's line in which misguided philanthropy has built colleges and universities for the education of Negroes, would take charge of these universities and modify their educational systems, and a system of education should be provided for the Negro embracing the three r's, largely mixed with industrial training, so as to fit the Negro particularly to live with the people with whom he is to live and serve the communities where he lives.'

"This gentleman said that there should not be the same kind of education provided for the black man in this section as was provided for the white man. O, I stand in the National Capital to-night to say that all such doctrines are vagaries and heresies! (Great applause.) I want to say that the best of education is none too good for every American citizen. I want to say as a student of the history of republics, and of constitutional government, and of nations still living, many dead and passed from the stage of activity, that any man who studies the progress of democratic society and democratic institutions must know that no democratic society is safe and permanent nor perpetuated by ignorance, nor can it be. It is founded by intelligence and must be saved by the intelligence of its people. (Great applause.)

"I want to say further upon that very point, although many may differ with me upon this particular point I am discussing, now, it matters not what any man may say, I believe in industrial education. I believe in all kinds of education, but you can never get my consent to substitute a system of industrial education for real intellectual culture. I say that not because I am 'prejudiced to any institution or to any movement. Industrial education is good for the white man and it is good for the black man; good for every man in this country. The great thing the Negro and the white man needs, and all Americans need, is real education, which makes to soul enlargement, to spiritual development, enlargement of the mind, a stirring of the divinity within the American citizen, living up out of the small man into the big man.

"Various systems are proposed for Negro education and these systems have the endorsement of many of our best white men who hold the pocketbooks and the purse strings that go to support

education. Many of these systems are supported and believed in by many good colored men. I want to lay down a rule to-night, for I say to you, I do not like to talk at random. I like to give men a reason for the faith that is in me. I say to you in Washington, and I wish all America could be assembled before me to-night—I say to you that before you approve any system, and especially when opinions are so varied as they are to-day, before you approve any system for your children, be they black or white, you ought to test those systems by some rule that will reveal to you whether they are proper systems. No system is proper except that which is inherent in itself, and stands upon its own strength and its own power. That system of merits in themselves is not fitted for one unless it fits the destiny of the subject which is to be educated under that system. It, first of all, ought to demonstrate itself in itself to be proper and right, and ought to demonstrate itself in itself to fit the nature and condition and history and destiny of the Negro that is to be educated. Now that brings me to this point; you ought to examine the Negro thoroughly. I wish every white man could hear that statement—examine the Negro and provide for him the education which suits his essential nature. Examine him particularly on two points: psychologically and physiologically. Whatever you find him to be, then suit your educational system to him as such. If you find him to be a mule or a horse, or an ox or a man, then fit your system to him according to the findings in the case.

“I have examined the ox and I have examined the mule and I have examined the Negro and here is what I find. I find that when I examined the mule or the ox his supreme virtue resides in his feet which fit him for the road. I find in the horse that his own supreme virtue is found in his splendid shoulders that fit him for the cart. I therefore conclude when I am educating a horse or a mule I am educating him either for the road or the cart. I am educating him for the very thing he knows and for which God ordained him. When I examine an ox, I find his virtue resides in his neck and that virtue fits him for the yoke. I therefore conclude, train the ox for the yoke and the others for that which nature endowed him and for which God made him. I have no hesitancy in fixing his system of education accordingly. But when I examine the black man; when I examine him psychologically and physiologically; when I examine him historically, I find at every point that I start the examination and at every point where I come out with a conclusion, I find here a genius heavily known as a man. (Great appaluse.) When I examine a man, I find that I examine that physical animal whose intellectual capacity has no more equal on the face of God's earth and whose endowment makes him just a little lower than the angels. I find that the thing of power in man is mind. I find that the seat of power in man is the brain. I conclude, therefore, that he who would educate man's feet or man's shoulders or man's hands accomplishes something for civilization and for society, and he who trains the brain educates the man and builds empires.

"I say that man's great power resides in his brain. It is in the form of mind; it is in the form of spirit; and if you would develop the mind you must seek to develop that portion of man, and you must bring to bear upon him those forces and those branches of studies that will break loose the fetters that bind him in this direction and it is in this case and in this particular direction that the Negro needs especial attention; and especially during these trying times when brains and spiritual power; when learning and greatness are so much needed to defend our cause before the American people. I want to say, too, on this very particular point that I am talking about, that not only is it true that the thing in man to be particular about is his mind, his spirit, his soul, but about the system which is suited for the education and development and training of man particularly in a Republic. See to it that that system has for its chief feature the enlargement of that mind; the cultivation of that mind so as to give sight to it, insight, comprehensiveness, depth and grasp, and power, so that man can see what he is looking at, and be able to interpret whatever man makes.

"I am firmly of the opinion that there are hosts of good white men in this country, and thank God for it, but I am sorry to say that the good and true and just and fair are so much in the minority that they can not bring about what they would. If this race is finally redeemed, it must produce its own leaders and its own promoters. You must see to it in your educational system that the important part of man is enlarged. Whatever else you do with him, and do not anybody get the idea that I am opposed to industrial education—my theory of education is this, that everything that he comes in contact with is educative; all processes that he passes through are educational, but to me that is not the subject of the school house. It is a subject of general experience. That is education which will redeem children equally; that will enable him to take his place in the Republic side by side with his fellow citizen and not be one whit behind any of the races. I say to you that 10,000,000 of Negroes in any country constitute too great a part of the body politic to be chained by any halfway ground of the purest and best education. (Great applause.) There are too many of us, and thank God that they have that potentiality and prolificness that multiplies at an astonishing rate. (Great applause.) They used to say that there was a danger of our dying out like the American Indian, but that is not so. On my way from Ohio last night, a gentleman said to me that from the looks of things now, the white man is more sterile and the Negro more prolific. And it is hardly a question what will take place within the next fifty years. (Applause.) Let that be as it may and let that be considered by any man as any man chooses to consider it, the one thing I am concerned about, as a father of children and as a Negro, is that you, in every hamlet, in every cabin, at every cross road, in every section of this great nation wherever black children are born in the world, begin to consult with your God at once how you can make of those children the biggest possible men in America. That is the thing I am concerned about today. (Applause.) You need not be afraid about our white brethren. Overtake him in these great things, for he is put-

ting spurs to his horse and he is way up the road ahead of us. Tell him to go on, but for God's sake don't burn the bridges, nor close the doors behind him, for we are coming. Tell him to believe it and if he does not believe it, come over in Ohio and take a seat with me in my office a day and I will convince him that up that same road, over the same bridge, through the same door, the American black man is pressing. (Great applause.)

"I want to say also that this attempt to substitute what is known as industrialism for real education is not only damaging to the Negro, but is thought to be particularly helpful to the white man by many of its advocates: but I want to say that the black man is not alone injured by the attempt to substitute industrial training for intellectual training. It is a fact demonstrated by philosophy, demonstrated by experience, everywhere coming up before our eyes, in a democratic country where all are supposed to be equal; in a constitutional government where all are the same before the law; in a republic where people look to their leaders and law makers, it is dangerous for that country to have ten millions of that people to be kept one whit behind the rest of the people. And our great legislature saw that in time. If I lived in Springfield with my distinguished J. W. Keifer (Great applause) and there is no interest in the City of Springfield that affects his wife or daughter, or his house that would not in the final analysis affect him; and for that very reason I would be as good a man and as big a man as he is. (Great applause.)

"The motives which lie behind the attempt to substitute industrial education for the Negroes instead of intellectual, I have placed under three general heads:

"1. My first reason is—I am not talking about what man says, for if men's actions were always in keeping with their words, we would not have any trouble with this Government—I am talking about the thing that is and not the thing it is said to be. I say to-night as a student of these affairs that one of the great motives that lies behind the attempt to substitute industrial for real education is 'Old time Helotism.' The Negro was brought from Africa not for the purpose of being made a Christian; not for the purpose of being made an American citizen, a self-directing leader and self-directing land owner of himself, his wife and children, but for the express purpose of helotism; hewers of wood and drawers of water; servants of servants in the house of his brethren because of the strength and power of this motive. Every door to intellectual learning was closed and learning was absolutely forbidden, and if a man dared to give him of that forbidden fruit, that day he died. Learning was made to him a veritable forbidden fruit for the reason that enlarged mind and unfettered spirit and cowardly servitude did not go together. The white men in this country in the days of slavery knew it well and hence they made education the veritable forbidden fruit, and the white man that dared to give the Negro this forbidden fruit had to forswear that business or go the way of the worst of criminals. Why was it so? There was a specific purpose for which the Negro was brought to this country—to be servants of servants in the house of his brethren. But out of that condition the Just God, the Mighty, the

Eternal Father who numbers the hairs upon our heads; who takes notice of the tiny grass; who takes notice of the worm that turns in the dust; who cares for the sparrow, finally called a man up out of the 'Wilderness' of Kentucky and sent him forth, like a gigantic child of nature, untutored except by God and His Spirit force, who led him to burn his oil at midnight; that great gigantic rail splitter who stood in the Kentucky Legislature and said, if ever the opportunity comes to me to hit that 'damnable institution,' I will hit it. (Great applause.) God brought that man out of Kentucky and sent him forth with into the White House and placed him on that high eminence, and he never forgot his promise. When the opportunity came, he drew his greatest strength together and he struck that institution at Gettysburg; he struck it at Bull Run; he struck it at Antietam; he struck it at Milliken's Bend; he struck it in the Wilderness; and he struck it in the Battle above the Clouds; yes, he struck it at Appomattox Court House and that 'damnable institution' fell! (Long applause.) I tell you, he struck it and it fell and was buried in its rotten hell beyond all resurrection.

"With the death of American slavery helotism ought to have died, but it did not. But as soon as the men gathered themselves from that awful conflict, they began to devise ways so that what they lost in one form they would gain in another. They proposed for the Negro a different kind of education from which they gave the white man and they took particular enjoyment in giving him an education that would fit him for the highest service, but for the same old business. (Applause.)

"Now you may say I am a poor philosopher, but I have been teaching that subject for ten years and I ought to know a little about it by this time.

"2. There is another motive. Not all of my brethren are included in this same class. That class is made up of good white men and good negroes, plenty of them, who say that industrial education is the chief form of education for the Negro because it is practical. But this word practical misleads a great many Negroes and a great many white men. Now that is practical which aids a man in the surest and deepest way to accomplish the things of his life and his destiny. That is practicality, when in a community it makes J. H. Jones the biggest possible Jones that can be. (Great applause.) Not the thing that is best suited for Brother Keifer's use, but the thing that is best suited for my own use is practical. And I say to you, that word 'practical' has misled so many good people; for if you follow it out it is an illusive word. It is the ghost in another dress. Nothing more.

"3. But there is another class and this class is made up largely of Negroes, and many educators of the country form this class. It is the 'get much theory.' They preach from the river to the end of the world; from Dan to Beersheba. If you would take their advice, you would capitalize cities instead of educating cities. They will see that you get much of life. Therefore it is the best thing. How illusive is this term; how deceptive. It is not the man that gets a great lot out of the world; it is the man who makes of himself the

biggest instrumentality in the world; the man who makes much out of himself, that man can get much out of the world. I have no hesitancy in telling you—no matter how good a blacksmith you are, nor how good a carpenter you are; or how good you are at this thing or the other—I do not care what you say, if you say you are in earnest that you are going to take your blacksmith trade and push your cause against mine because I have nothing, I will take the house you build from you. I will take it from you by my scientific and classical, my deeper and broader knowledge. I will take your horse and wagon away from you. I will take every house you build from now until you go to your grave, and will ride in your buggies beside. (Great applause.)

"The thing a republic needs is not less big men and big women but men and women who have intellectual minds; men and women whose minds are cultured and so enlarged that they can not stoop to small things and the armies of the rabble can not run them away. When we manufacture those kind of men and women out of our ten millions we will have nothing to fear in America. I do not want anybody to suppose that I am opposed to industrial education. I believe in work, in industries for black men and white men alike, however. I do not believe it is fair for the white men and a few well thinking Negroes to industrially educate the Negro and get him away from the higher and let him drop to the peasant class, while the white man goes on to glory in other good things. I believe in industrial education. I believe in it as a supplement to mental culture. But as a supplement to mental culture, if I am to have one without the other, for God's sake unchain my mind and with my mind I will unchain my hands myself. (Great applause.)

"And now, ladies and gentlemen, that brings me to the higher form of my discussion and I am sorry the evening has grown so old that I must cut short my argument. I am glad that Senator Foraker is not here—although I would be very glad to hear him—as I am using my time and his also. As the Negro is a man psychologically and physiologically constructed, he chiefly needs the kind of education which I have described. It is best for the republic! it is best for the white man that Negroes be given higher education and if the white man really knows his business, he will see to it that every Negro who can afford higher education for his children shall have it. If the Negro can not afford to give his children higher education, then white philanthropy together with what money the state would give ought to give them this higher education. If the white man knew what was the best good of the republic he would insist upon higher education being placed within the reach of all the people.

"For development, I lay down seven species: I will proceed with the lower to the higher and if I must leave off any, I will leave off the heavier so that in the near future I will get an invitation to come back and finish my speech. (Applause.)

"1. The first reason I give and hold for higher education for the Negro as a patriotic duty and national necessity, is this: I claim that this very civilization itself demands it. This civilization is a

product of higher education. It is a product of intensive intellect, and not the product of the coarse white production, but of the brainiest white men of this country. It is a civilization high in its character, vast in its limitations. No man, white or black, can comprehend it unless he is an intelligent man. This is my first reason.

"2. This civilization should never be lowered in order to come down on an average level with Negro intelligence. All Negroes should be lifted up. I would not like to see this civilization lowered one whit. My only fear is that it will go down, and if the white men do not use a little more brains and less brute force, this civilization has marked its height already.

"3. This civilization itself demands preservative conditions, which make for the ramification with nations. The definite conditions for national affairs are laid and founded and grounded upon the laws of God and the laws of God everywhere ramify the affairs of nations in order that these laws might operate among men for the government of society and preservation of the masses of the people.

"4. I have still another reason, which I think is greater. The national conditions for national welfare are grounded upon the powers, the resources and activities of nature. A nation can not thrive and can not take care of its daily increasing population unless the intelligence of the people are lifted up so they can more fully understand nature's laws and operations and get in harmony with those laws so as to bring from nature the yield which God intended it should give forth for the maintenance of this great republic.

"5. But that is not all. I claim that the wealth of a nation, of a republic, is also grounded upon intelligence and virtue of its citizens.

"6. I need not go farther, yet more I claim, that the humanity of the Negro ought to demand humanity of the white man. They served the white man 250 years in servitude and made it possible for the white man to enjoy his labor. The humanity in the Negro which caused him to do this ought to appeal to the white man to let him have some of that money that he made for him and let him rise up and care for his mother, his own wife and children.

"And now to you, black men: You are looking to President Roosevelt for redemption as the father of the Nation. You are looking to him for help and amelioration of your condition in the affairs of the nation. You are looking to our great War Secretary and to a great many of the Cabinet to carry out the mission of Christ to ameliorate the conditions of the Negro; but mark you, tonight, and tell this to your wife when you go home: tell it to your children, wake them up out of bed and whisper in their ears; tell your sons and daughters to tell to their children and their children that a man came from Ohio to Washington for the same purpose to say to you Negroes of Washington, to the United States that the history of civilization throughout all nations, all ages tells one unbroken story which I give to you tonight that wherever a weak people come into the midst of a strong people and take up its habitation and remain weak and ignorant that strong people will always hitch that weak people by the side of the mule and horse and work him for his enjoyment. I say your redemption is in self-evolution. You want to preach it

to every Negro child in the land to rise up and be somebody; to rise up and be a man; and if in the attempt you die, die and go on to heaven for you are better off. (Great applause.)

"Yes, I plead for higher education for the Negro. I plead as a patriotic duty to the state and as a necessity to the nation, as a good to the republic, as a good to the black man and white man. I would not stint his education. I would teach him mathematics from the simplest principles of arithmetic to objective geometry and celestial mechanics. And if by his mathematical principles he was able to take possession of Mars and Jupiter, he should have the opportunity so far as I was concerned. It would enable him to see with radiation, with breadth and sweep to his vision. He would know his friends even before they had spoken. Such an education would give a Negro thorough introduction to the visible universe and when he had reached that point, he would ask nobody but God to be his friend. That is the kind of education I would give the black man. You are neglecting the study of the great languages. I know that Negroes, as well as white men, are inclined to ridicule the idea of Greek and Latin. I want to tell you that my experience with black men and white men is, if you want to enlighten a man's mind, you must teach to him the 350 forms of Greek verbs; the declensions of Latin; the intricate tasks of the Caesars and all of those great actors of great acumen. When you have gone over that track, you will have put in that man a liberal mind and a liberal spirit. I plead that the black man ought to be given an education that will give him an intimate knowledge of the great languages; should include a great knowledge of history which would enable him to know the nations that rose and fell and the causes that led to their failure; the great races and their relation to each other, so that we may know what to preserve and what to kick aside. But you can not know these things unless you are a student of broad scholarship. This education should include an economic and broad knowledge of all things.

"They tell me that the negro is imitative. If that is so, I want every negro tonight to prove it and imitate the white man in one great essential. Imitate the white man in the matter of education. Did you hear what I said, imitate the white man in one great essential and that essential is embraced in education. When a white child is born into this world from a respectable parentage, when that beautiful mother looks over the cradle at the child, which she produced, bone of her bone, flesh of her flesh, she looks in her husband's face and says to him, 'my dear, what sacrifice can we make to God in order to make of this little bundle of protoplasm the biggest organic body that ever sat on a throne?' (Great applause.) That is her question. That is what I want you to do. If you have gone out to work in the morning and on returning home you find a new born black baby has come, put aside your dinner, lean over it, imitate the example of these great people. This mother day and night watches over this tender child, singing lullabies to it and kissing it on the cheek. She does not tell it ghost stories like many of our mothers do, but sings perfection. As soon as that little fellow gets so he can call mamma

sweetly to it and kisses its brow until its very tissues emulate into and papa, she takes him up in her arms and places him in a kindergarten under the very best pedagogue the country has produced. His development begins. After that he is placed in a grammar school for eight long years, being under the strictest vigilance and most careful culture and best training that the world has ever known. He is trained in all the rudiments of the King's English, elements of arithmetic and other splendid things of history, and then when he reaches the age of ten or twelve, he is taken to the high school where he remains four long years under the best teachers and studies the rudiments of higher learning. At the end of the four years, that same boy or girl is taken to one or more of the noted colleges of America where this learning is made deep and broad, where the very best culture is put into him and where the most experienced teachers the world has ever seen direct his education. He comes out at the age of eighteen or twenty and enters a university and takes up higher courses still, which places him into some specialty. He traces that specialty out and out and out until he strikes the very limit of the visible universe, and he stands there with nobody around but the awakened divinity that has come through the way of this long study. He looks out into the darkness, and as he peers out into that darkness, dizzily, he finds that he can not fathom it. He cries out, who art thou that movest in the darkness, beware for this white man is after thee! (Great applause.)

"I want to ask that you imitate that white man in the education of your sons and your daughters.

"And now, fellow citizens, and Mr. Chairman, we have come tonight for the purpose of celebrating the thirty-eighth anniversary of the adoption of the 15th Amendment to the Constitution. It guarantees to every American citizen the right of casting his ballot in every station, town and cross road. You could have made no occasion more worthy than this one. I congratulate you upon your patriotism. It matters not that we have been robbed largely of that privilege, still we are right in that we appreciate the great cause which these immortal amendments celebrate, and the men that were connected with them, and the men that stand for them today.

"We are told by some wise Negroes and lots of white men that Negroes ought to stay out of politics. We are told by white men who live below Mason and Dixon's line that if we do not stay out of politics, they will take it from us. Hence they have turned up the 'father clause' and all other clauses which will keep the Negroes from voting. There are men in Congress who have sworn under the Constitution to stand by the Constitution and who stand guilty at the bar of God as falsifying its organic law.

"I say to you that all who preach the doctrine that the Negro ought to eschew politics and let it alone, do not know how to properly diagnose you. You ought not to pay any attention to them. If I were you, I would ask the general Government to make a general appropriation to gather up all those Negroes and put them in a free school. To me the ballot has three great purposes, in the hands of the common man:

"1. One great office of the American ballot is to teach the common citizen the principles of politics by the use of the ballot, of the interests of the affairs of the State, county, and nation. It will help you to know the departments of the Government, and to know when any offense is committed by any of its officers and how to correct that one when he needs correcting. It is one of the greatest educators that can be given a people. We can not afford to be without the ballot. There is no school more potential than is the school of the American ballot.

"2. Another reason is that it is the intention of the Republic, the intention of every constitutional government, of any democracy from the days of the Greeks, the Romans and of all the old nations under constitutional governments from whom we have learned the idea that the ballot in the hands of the common man was a protection against the law maker and the executive, because if they did not do their duty and legislate fairly for all the people, with the might of the ballot they could be silenced. It was for this reason that the ballot was given the poor and the weak in any country and he can not afford to give up his ballot, his constitutional correction for evils in the country.

"3. Another great reason is that it is the only weapon the democratic tyrant is afraid of. That democrat is never afraid of the weak man until he finds that weak man wields a ballot. The people of the South saw this or the legislatures of the South would never have inserted in the statute books a 'Grandfather Clause.' With the ballot in the hand of the Negro, there is no legislature in America that would dare put on the statute books a 'Jim Crow' car law, or a 'Grandfather Clause.' There is not a Southern State, municipality, a school district, that would dare legislate to give the whites three-fourths of the money raised for education, while the Negro gets one-fourth. Remember the day will come, and that day is not far off, as I believe it is not, when over the land wherever the stars and stripes float, the black man will be permitted to cast his ballot without favor. I was sitting in my office the other night and my soul grew weary and my heart got sick; I really got tired when I remembered that the Secretary of the Treasury, the President of the United States and the Secretary of War, when they saw fit went to Cuba and took over the Cuban Government in their hands until they could arrange for a fair and honest election and here under the very shadow of the Government they could do nothing. I say my heart got sick when I thought of the same three great officers setting up the American Government in Cuba, while at home nothing has been done to preserve the organic law of the land. It is an awful pity. It is an awful sight to behold. Where is the Navy? Where is the Army? Where is the Treasury? Where is Cuba? Where is the Grand Army of the Republic when the Constitution is being walked on as if it were a dirty rag? (Great applause.)

And now, ladies and gentlemen,

“‘Right forever on the scaffold,
Wrong forever on the throne,
Yet that scaffold sways the future
And behind the dim unknown
Standeth God within the shadow
Keeping watch upon His own.’

“God has not forgotten us. I beg you not to be disconsolate. Do not lose faith in this Great Republic, this Ship of State will right itself some day. Yes, thank God, it will! What a spectacle have we not witnessed! In less than seventy-two months these very black men representing her by fighting under Old Glory in Cuba, in the Philippines, in China and around the world in her conflicts, and then coming home to be quartered at Brownsville right under the flag, right under the shadow of the Capitol, they are to be belittled, they are to be misrepresented in so much that it is the conclusion at least of those in high quarters that fifteen or eighteen were guilty of shooting up Brownsville and because that conclusion has been reached by those in high quarters, 300 of the bravest men that ever carried a gun in any battle were thrown out in disgrace: some of which having served their country for twenty-six years. Whoever heard of similar jurisprudence, where the innocent must first prove himself innocent before he can be regarded as not guilty.

“Thank God, my fellow citizens, the brave men are not all dead yet; for in that trying hour, if that great man had not risen and spoken out from that high eminence, I believe the rocks out of which the Capitol is built would have spoken. None too late, but born out of due time, there arose from the great State of Ohio a soldier, a statesman, a patriot, who has never faltered for two generations in standing for the Constitution, for Justice and Righteousness at the bar of the American Republic, who stood up in the Senate, wrapped his judicial robes about him and stooped down and picked up the cause of the black soldier, when that cause had been trampled in the dust beneath his enemies’ feet, that giant picked it up and held it up before their gaze and restored it to its former position, step by step, until, thank God, that cause no longer trails in the dust, but Heaven has recognized it. (Great applause.) That soldier, that jurist, that statesman, that patriot, that lawyer was no less a figure than Joseph Benson Foraker. (Long and loud applause.)

“I am for Foraker! I am for Foraker! because I am for the Constitution. (Great applause.) I am for the Constitution because I am for the flag and the nation. And if I forget him, ‘O, Jerusalem, let my lips forget her cunning and my tongue cleave fast to the roof of my mouth.’ I can not forget him! I will not forget him! I will stand by him until the last stars go down. (Great applause.) I do not care who is offended. If they choose to be offended at me because I am thus, they are offended with a man. (Applause.) I owe allegiance to the State, but deeper and truer to the sympathy which God

has placed within him. My country claims my fealty, but before it made me a citizen, Great Nature made me a man. (Great applause.)

"And now, ladies and gentlemen, I beg your pardon for this long speech. I have kept you late, thinking that my distinguished Senator from Ohio would be here. I have tried to be particular about my own side and particular about his good name. So I thank you for your kindness, although, I am sure, I have not finished my speech; I could speak six hours longer.

"I beg you to accept my deepest thanks for the presence of the students of my old Alma Mater. God bless her; God bless them; God bless the American people. I thank you." (Long applause.)





N MANCHESTER,
INDIANA



